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The Fioretti (1969)

Marian University - Indianapolis

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fioretti

The Marian College Magazine



Fall 1969

Vol. XXVIII No. 1

"All we are saying is give peace a chance..."

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The rays from this peace prism will interest you, hopefully, to explore even just one of its facets. When you pick up peace for contemplation, you hold not a litany of idealistic euphemisms, but a potentiality, a possibility, and maybe even a reality. It may be you will find satisfaction in the quest, or perhaps mere frustration. But then perhaps the grasping for the equilibrium of love is just as important as finding it.

Within ourselves we strive for some mental balance which is labeled peace of mind. A majority of people find that balance. Unfortunately it often develops into a certain smugness about the world and can lead to apathy. What we should consider is the peace of the mind of the nation and of the world. Peace for a nation is not social non-revolution nor the absence of racial strife. Peace for the world is not the mere cessation of hostilities. There must be a positive aspect in that for which we are searching.

Efforts leading to the positive ideal necessarily begin in the individual level. It is ultimately the individual who changes the status quo and decides how he will effect that change. Acceptance of 'the system' is not necessarily praising the status quo; it can be passive complaints followed up by no constructive action. There can be no neutrality in moral issues.

We present this prism in the expectation that you will be gently shaken from the idea that academics and social action are incompatible. Such a fractured view of peace is hard to heal.

Bonnie Looney

EDITOR NOTES II

The theme is peace prism. Each interpretation of peace is like a color. Can a color be right or wrong? What is the source for this spectrum of ideas? Is it another idea, a hope, a dream, an interpretation, a theory, a theme? Why so many different colors? Why are some called beautiful, some drab, some ugly?

Peace prism is a metaphor and no more. Shall peace then be a metaphor? Something to think about, to compare moments with, to speak about as if it were similar to something we have known? And who will live for a metaphor, die for a metaphor?

The five year peace plan, the five minute meditation for peace of mind, the peace mass, the peace parade, the peace platform--means to what end? What gross national product, what political network, what value system, what type of society--what color are men planning, arguing, destroying for?

When the lightwave passes through the prism, it is easy to choose a favorite color. It is easy to want to paint the rest of the world with that color. And with so many shades and designs it is easy to forget about the source being the same. And so with peace.

Am I too simple in calling that source humanness--the desire for my happiness, for others' happiness? Is it possible that, if men would consider the source of their wants and needs as something that joins rather than separates, if they would live for that source

rather than for their own particular colors, that peace could be? For it has never been. If I am too simple minded, then what should I live for--a metaphor?

Humanness is too complicated, too filled with ironic, confusing situations to be concerned with. Humanness is simple--man helping man. Peace is a metaphor--something to describe. Peace is nonexistent but possible, dependent upon recognition of the source. The source separates. The source unites. We are prisms. We are humans.

A decision. Yours.

Tess Eichenberger

A Prayer Refracted

Lord?
make me an
Instrument

piano Q-tip corkscrew
gun vernier caliper violin
tweezers pencil scalpel
trumpet camera

of your our my their his her any one someone's
peace.

peace /pes/ n. 1: a state of calm and quiet: esp. public security under law. OH?
2: freedom from disturbing thoughts or emotions. oh.
3: a state of concord (as between persons or governments)
O say can you see. . . ?

Lord?

Where there is hatred
Where is there hatred?
Hatred is there
Hatred is where

Love isn't (let me sow it)
(who's gonna grow it?)

And then you take all the rest of them:
injury doubt despair darkness sadness
Line them up
Shoot them down with
pardon faith hope light joy.

Who wins the duel?

Lord?

O Divine Master,
Grant
Consolation
Understanding
Love

(At least send a sympathy card
and don't count how many you don't get when part of you is
Dead)

For it is in dying
It is.

Was
Is now and ever shall be
In dying.

Lord?

SDMosf

Stillness of Poetry

Poetry affects people in many ways. All of them radiate from a primeval state of stillness existing between the reader and the word. Stillness? How can something like "stillness" convey that faint tingle of incipient desire when reading Cummings' "i like my body when it is with your body"? Or the overpowering wash of frustration when Eliot finally chants "Shantih shantih shantih"? Or even the quiet charm in watching Ogden Nash play with syllables like a juggler? Obviously examples could be multiplied until they include the seemingly endless modes poets employ to articulate how men look at themselves and their world, and perhaps just as obviously "stillness" cannot do justice to this range of potential feelings. But is it not true that stillness must be the condition of the poet as a prelude to creation? When Cummings was performing what "i like my body" is about, he was presumably in no mood to write poems, or anything else for that matter, and the same goes double for the reader as he approaches the words on the page. Silence must rule before language can speak. This state of peaceful coexistence between man the experiencing animal and man the wielder of language is not peaceful in the negative and trivial sense that when we are reading (or writing) poems we are not laying waste our neighbor's fields; it is rather an anticipatory state, a state when we catch our breath from the swoosh of everyday life before communing with others in the temple of language. In this mythical house of worship each man's god is his and

his alone in that the emotion produced begins and ends in his own heart. The point is that a brief moment of silence must be observed before entering the holy portals.

Stillness then must not be confused with the final happy union of poet, experience, and word—all are essential to fund material for the uniquely human adventure of "reading a poem". And depending on the poet, the particular experience under scrutiny, and the language chosen to portray that experience, we have the special twinge that distinguishes the bright poem from the sad, the groveling from the ecstatic. What is often lost sight of, however, is the enclosing boundary of peace that presents the opportunity for these three ingredients to coalesce in that magic mold which men in their unconquerable ignorance call Creation. For the poet the act of making poetry is impossible without this boundary while the act of appreciating poetry fosters it in every reader. To embrace peace and quiet of this sort is not to "escape", but to prepare for that glorious union when souls, at least for a moment, still their loneliness, in a common cry. Regardless of the subject matter of the poem—erotic, despairing, or jovial—the fact that the committed reader must silence his own personal quests will not only help open up for him the immense riches of language but will also, in that very act of conscientious self-denial, broaden his sensitivity to life as lived and life as written about, a desirable pursuit in any age and time.

David White

"If we shoot
our fellow men, with whom shall we
LIVE?"

J. Weingartner

Worship Service

--Let us have

*a breaking of bread together
Where we'll wear paper hats
I-love-me faces, and
I-hate-me hearts.*

--Let us talk

*Saying "Pax, Shalom, Peace"
And smile happy noisy grins
And soft soap bubble giggles.*

--Let us deck

*Our house with streamers
Of fluttering pretty colors
And word up the walls with
Beauty, light and truth.*

--And who will then discern

*Our whitened-sepulchre selves
As we pseudo-celebrate
With never-meeting eyes?*

Jenni Henricks

Once I lost my calendar

I just couldn't remember

What day it was--

Monday, Tuesday, no it must be Wednesday.

It's strange how I lost track of time.

I didn't even know what month it was.

One day it had to be April

Soft warm breezes and bright sunshine.

Then I became convinced it was July.

Lovely bouquets of roses and marigolds

Bloomed in every flower bed.

Then the cold, wet winds whipped in
And I knew it must be November.

It's strange how I lost track of time.

Every day was so unique I really

Didn't bother

Trapping myself in a woeful rut of

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

(Not to mention Marches and Septembers).

Each day that followed defied

Assignment to a category of

Restricted expectations.

Never searching for that lost calendar

I devised a new measure of time

Consisting only of Sundays.

Ellen Dugan

The April 3rd Massacre

Music by Harry Groton
Lyrics by Don Merrill

Time: April 3, 1969

Place: The Church of the Fraternity of United Christian Kingdoms

Dirty hippy. This is the term that people applied to him. A better description would be male Caucasian, 5 feet 11, 165 pounds, with shoulder length hair and beard of the same rusty hue. His sandals were leather, knee-length thongs which were wrapped as tight as the look of his piercing blue eyes. In his company was a young woman who would be classified in the same way. She seemed to float beside him in idolization, not once taking leave of her gaze of him.

It so happened that they decided to visit a church on this particular April day, which was the reason why they were there. The two walked in while he remarked that he had once visited the place as a child. A jumbling of noise drew their attention to the basement and after a brief visit to the gloomy hollowness of the church itself, they proceeded down the stairs. Before their eyes were rows upon rows of official K of C tables arranged conveniently around the bodies of plump female parishioners playing with their bingo cards and piles of food. Audible whispers could be heard over the forbearing silence when the pair happened into their sacred chamber, until all eyes were centered upon them. Cries of protest rang out of the faces cracked with layers of pancake makeup--Cries that sent blood rushing to the face of the girl and to the brain of the man. In unison they shouted out the words of peace, love, and unity in trying to drown out the cries of degenerate hippy and worthless slut. Suddenly with eyes aglow with rage, the man took hold of the two nearest tables and overturned them, sending bingo cards flying and leaving the helpless women in panic. From his waist, the man unravelled his leather belt and cut loose through the air with wild flings. On one of these misdirected flings the strap landed upon the benigned silver-haired pastor, Father Damimon, who muttered "son of a bitch" as he made his way under the tables on all fours. He immediately rushed to the pay phone and taking a

dime from the poor box, notified police headquarters. "Hello, this is Father Damimon, and some crazy hippy is busting my place up and beating on some of my best contributors. Get the hell over here on the double before he defiles this sacred place. Bless you."

Within three minutes sirens were wailing outside the church and the misguided couple rushed out the back door into the alley. Four cops immediately apprehended the girl while the man broke away from the other one and ran around the corner. Heavy rain had begun to fall and the skies grew uncommonly dark. There was hope of escape-safety.

The chase continued into a dead-end alley with shouts of "Stop or I'll shoot," mixed with the sounds of feet splattering in mud puddles. Seeing the dead-end, the drenched man turned and faced his pursuer with a look of serene tranquility. A shot rang out, and then another. The man fell. Lightening flashed.

He lay there on his back with his arms outstretched, staring blankly up into the rain. The cop reholstered his pistol, and the breathless priest dangled some beads over the lifeless form and walked away. Then a thunderous voice boomed from the heavens: "This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased."

The Big Bayer Break

One day the world woke up with a splitting headache.
 The right temple pulsed to the shell beat in Viet Nam.
 The left temple shouted of poverty in a land of plenty.
 The forehead thumped a reminder of racial discrimination.
 Congress was in a tizzy!
 So all the senators
 And all the representatives
 Took two Bayer aspirin
 and lay down.
 And then again
 One day the world woke up with a splitting headache. . . .
 but four years later.

Mary Schulz

Your skin

White as the winter

For no blood flows

Your lips

Green as the swamps

For no meaning passes

Your eyes

Black as the night

For no sight exits

Your ears

Brown as the dead rose

For no word pierces

Your life

Clear as glass

For emptiness governs you

John Mahoney

We endorse the efforts and beliefs of the National Mobilization Committee to end the war in Viet Nam. We urge the co-operation of all those who oppose this war to speak out against the "silent majority" because peace is something too important not to be said.

Kor Collahan

Kevin Cassidy
 Sister David Mary Brown
 Peggy Giffen
 Mary D. Schults
 Thomas Cassidy
 Bonnie
 Sharon
 Mark
 Mary Ann Flattwood
 Mary Rose Klosski

WHY

Still at War

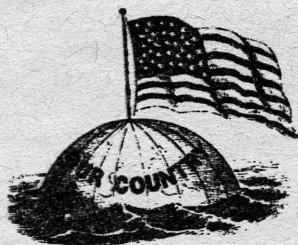
THEY

something to believe in

**The real revolution is
already happening**

GIVE PEACE A CHANCE!!!

One way or the other
it all goes up in smoke
Canada.



**Don't settle
for some of the taste
some of the time.**

change

MUST

Chicago

DIE?

'Ping-Pong Balls'

As the curtain rises we see a long table behind which three men are seated facing the audience. Each man wears a long black robe such as those worn by justices, and each man wears the mask of tragedy—the three masks are exactly alike. SILENCE!—

A man wearing a white tunic and a "Halloween-type" mask of a freak, enters from the right. He limps and grunts as he walks. He is carrying a very large cardboard box on which is printed "Ping-Pong Balls" in very large letters. He sets the box down on the stage to the left of the judges' table, and exits on the left, limping and grunting. SILENCE!—a pause!

1st Judge: (in the middle—very loud) "Bring in the prisoner!"

A man wearing what resembles a torn burlap sack is dragged onto the stage by two guards. The guards wear blue tunics and the same "freak" masks as the man who brought in the box. The man himself is barefooted and mask-less. His tunic is spotted with blood and what we can see of his skin is covered with scars and blood. He is made to kneel before the judges' table. The two guards move to the right of the stage.

1st Judge: (very loud) "Are you ready to confess?"

A pause follows during which the man collapses; he now is lying before the table.

1st Judge: (to the guards) "Revive him!"

The two guards come to the man and drag him to his feet and slap and hit him several times. One gets behind him and pushes on his shoulders and screams: "Kneel!" The man kneels and the two guards return to the right of the stage.

1st Judge: Are you ready to confess?

2nd Judge: (the judge to the left): Perhaps, your imperial honor, it would be judicious if we were to read the charges against the prisoner."

1st Judge: Very well! (He screams) Bring on the court secretary!

A man with blue tunic and freak face enters carrying a large scroll.

1st Judge: Read the charges against the prisoner.

Secretary: (lets the scroll drop to read it, as he reads he slowly re-rolls the scroll) Your imperial honor, and members of the court! Let it be known that in this the thirty-fifth year of Zep, this man did willfully and knowingly destroy one ping-pong ball. Let it be further assumed that he knew full well the gravity of his deed and the consequences thereof. That through this act he has profaned all that is holy in our land, not only its wise and loving leaders but the very foundation that holds us together—the Book. For yea verily it is written that 'Thou shalt not destroy ping-pong balls.' Thus through this act he has shown scorn not only for you and all the leaders of our land, but for the Book itself. (He screams) This man must be punished! (voice back to normal) For what kind of a land will there be when anyone will blatantly take it upon themselves to question and break the law, and the Book itself? For as we all know, it is written. Thus the court demands the death penalty.

A Play

3rd Judge: It seems obvious what our action should be, and to protect the very foundation of our wonderful land, we must put an end to this cancer, and kill this man.

Pause! Enter a man in uniform (the General). He wears the mask of tragedy and his entire chest is covered with medals and campaign ribbons. He says nothing, but goes over to the box and begins to take out some ping-pong balls and gives several to each of the judges. They nod with approval, and begin to smash the ping-pong balls in or with their fists. The General makes several trips to the box so that each of the judges can smash more than just a few of the ping-pong balls. After this "ritual" has proceeded for a time, the General moves to the left of the stage and stands by the box.

1st Judge: Before we pass sentence, is there anyone who wishes to speak on the prisoner's behalf?

Enter the prisoner's wife. She, too, wears a burlap tunic and no mask. She runs to her husband and tries to embrace him, but is prevented by the guards. They grab her and drag her to the right of the stage.

1st Judge: Who is this wretch?

Wife: (sobbing) I am the wife of the prisoner.

1st Judge: Do you wish to speak on his behalf?"

Wife: Yes.

1st Judge: Your husband has committed an unpardonable act, and deserves only death. However, as an act of benevolent mercy we will let you speak on his behalf.

Wife: Yes, it's true that my husband destroyed a ping-pong ball, but please, please don't kill him! We have six children that must be fed. If you kill my husband what will become of us? My husband is not a bad man; he just asked a lot of questions. He knew that it was written "Thou shalt not destroy ping-pong balls," but he always asked why. I tried to stop him, but he always asked why. Please, please don't kill him.

General: Your honor, if I may address the court?

1st Judge: Please do.

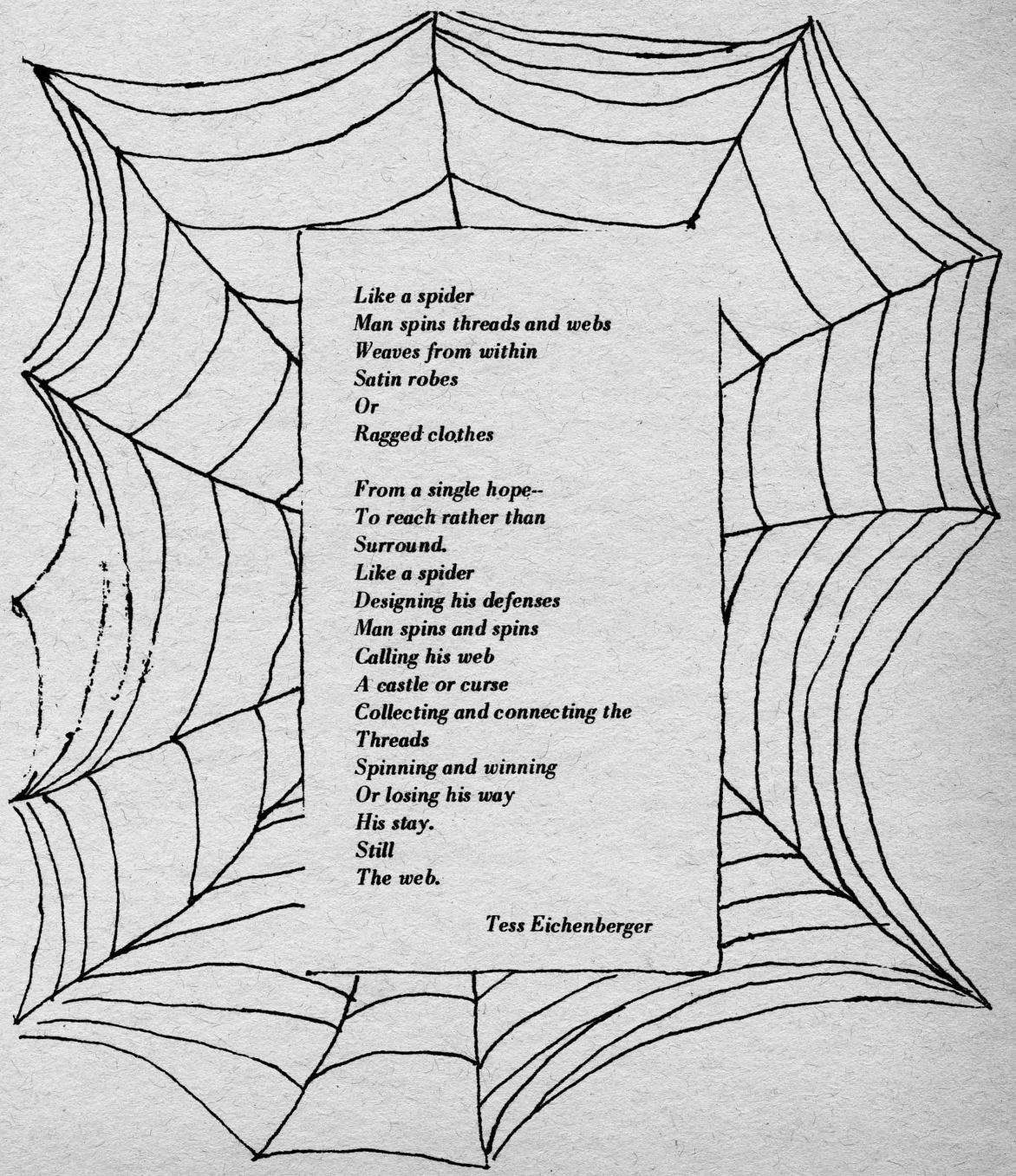
General: This country was founded on the principles of truth, love, and justice, and the Book. If we begin to listen to the babblings of this dumb, ignorant wretch, then what is to become of our principles? We cannot deny or ignore the Book! It is obvious that this man is a threat to everything we hold dear. You can see that just by looking at him. He must be put to death! Thank you.

1st Judge: Thank you, General, for your prudent words. (to the man) You wretch! I condemn you to death! (to the judges) Are there any objections?"

The other two judges shake their heads.

1st Judge: Then death it is!

The wife tears herself free from the two guards and runs to her husband. They embrace, and the curtain falls.



*Like a spider
Man spins threads and webs
Weaves from within
Satin robes
Or
Ragged clothes*

*From a single hope--
To reach rather than
Surround.
Like a spider
Designing his defenses
Man spins and spins
Calling his web
A castle or curse
Collecting and connecting the
Threads
Spinning and winning
Or losing his way
His stay.
Still
The web.*

Tess Eichenberger

Sovereignty and the Christian

Father Frazee

Since the twentieth century began, nations have increasingly thought of themselves as powers to the extent of their military might. Switzerland was a happy exception to the rule that international affairs were carried on with an understanding on all sides that a nation's voice carried only to the extent that its armed potential could be realized.

The mounting spiral of military spending has skyrocketed in the past decade as each country sought to find security in having a larger and better equipped army than its potential enemies. The generals in the Kremlin and the Pentagon, responsible for the defense of their respective nation's security, have made ever more stringent demands upon the economies and political policies of the Soviet Union and the United States. The scene has been duplicated on a smaller scale in almost every other country of the world.

The individual citizen, made insecure because he is constantly being warned about being 'taken over,' watches as militarism grows. He has been conditioned to believe that the demands of the army come before any other national need.

In such an atmosphere who speaks for peace? Is disarmament, in fact, a possibility?

The answer is an obvious no—as long as the prevailing opinion on national sovereignty prevails. If each individual nation state

claims it is answerable to no authority higher than itself, that its existence has priority over every other consideration of the world community, there can be little hope for international peace.

The Christian concept of man, as well as the Jewish and Islamic, however, teaches that being a part of humanity has priority over nationality. It sees the state as the servant of the individual. Man does not exist for the government, but rather the reverse. No matter how practice has deviated from theory on this matter throughout history, the doctrine has remained clear: society and its requirements are legitimate only to the extent they provide the individual with the conditions which best afford him the means of developing his personality to the fullest. God is primarily concerned with man, not with nations or states; Jesus preached to people, not to governments.

In today's atmosphere of mistrust and the acceptance of violence among nations the religious person has a great contribution to make. He can seek security and defense in developing his own interior life rather than depending upon external circumstances. He can learn to trust others—he can speak up for man—he can demand the right for each one to do his own thing as his conscience dictates.

Dear Mr. Nixon,

I listened to your now ancient 'VietNam' speech on the radio a couple of weeks ago and I must say, I was impressed. Your pompousness and ignorance ('The right way...is my way') left me no choice but to place you in that diminishing category of anti-Americans living in this land. Yes, Mr. Nixon, that's right-anti-American. Surely, you would agree that no American would allow the carnage of fellowmen that is taking place in an obscure country in SouthEast Asia to continue at any price? But, unfortunately, Mr. Nixon, this is what you have done when you decided to continue our imperialistic domination in a place where we have no authority to be.

I agreed with you wholeheartedly when you told me that 'North VietNam cannot defeat or humiliate the United States. Only Americans can do that.' And you, sir, as an American along with your so-called 'silent majority' have done just that: humiliated this country beyond any hope of regaining face with the world.

When I was young, I was taught how great a land I lived in, and sang about it: 'My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty.' Liberty? Rather hypocrisy. How is one free, if his head is clubbed by the police (our beloved protectors from crime) for protesting criminal acts? How is he free when he desires to resist a conscription to kill, but

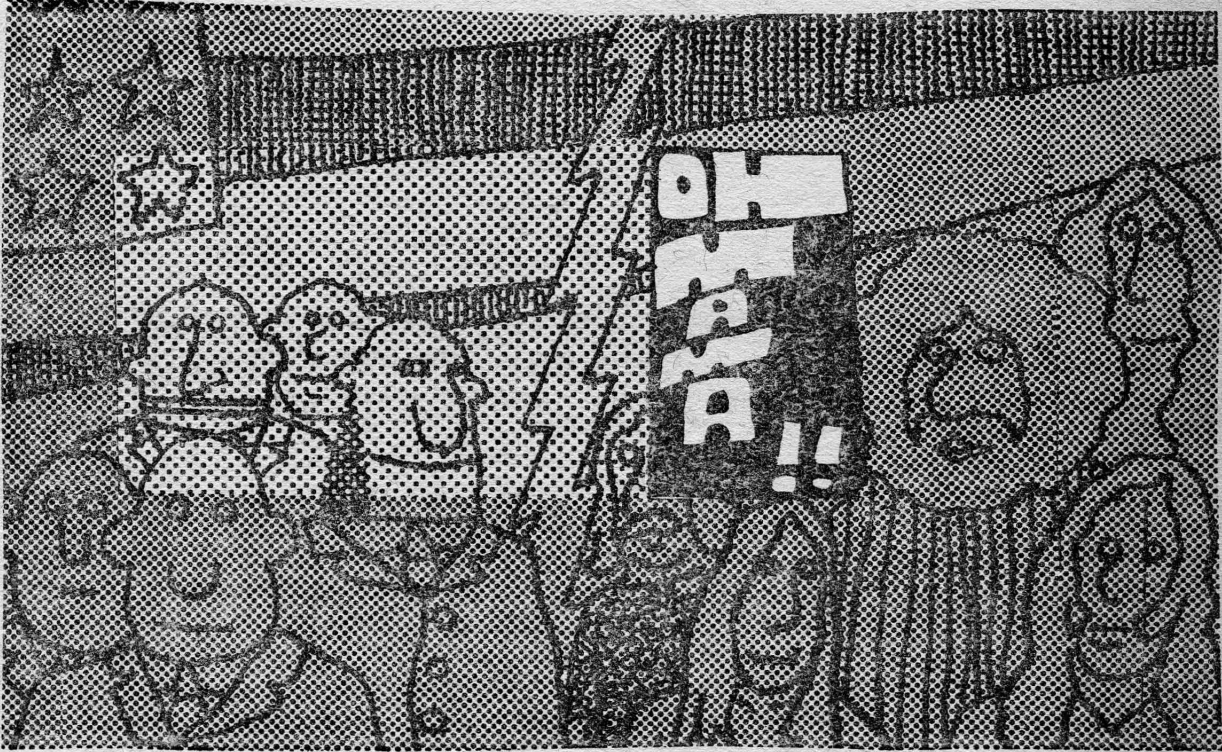
instead is imprisoned for that resistance? Yes, Mr. Nixon, it is the right word: hypocrisy.

My advice to you is to get this country out of VietNam immediately. By initiating a 'scheduled timetable' of withdrawal, you have dipped your hands deeper into the blood bath which continuously increases from our prolonged presence. You know as well as I do (because I believe you basically an intelligent person) that when you stated that you 'may have to revise this timetable if Hanoi significantly increases the war' you were contradicting any desire for peace. Your past actions tell me that you are experienced in revoking decisions and creating new ones. In my language we call that 'two-faced'.

I once loved this land in which I am imprisoned (just try to change nationalities). But this was before I was old enough to make judgements. In that same school where I learned of 'America the Beautiful' I was also taught to respect its flag as a symbol of my fatherland. 'I pledge allegiance to the flag, and to the republic for which it stands.' But now I can only step on that piece of cloth for to me it is no longer the symbol of a country which is 'one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.' Your speech, Mr. Nixon? A worthless piece of paper. This country....?

James F. Widner

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Teacup, life in a.

Jesus was lost for many days
 i found him in a teacup.
 Just him and me
 (Therefore neither of us
 at our best)

Stack in a rack
 fastquickhurrystackwashrinsedry
 stack away
 in neat rows
 on a silver tray

Teacups meeting
 curve to curve
 lip to lip
 Shoved, knocked, some cracked
 Empty, full, dirty, clean
 Busy being, filling, draining
 Chancely stacked, chancely met
 Each alone
 Not known.

you found him in a teacup?
 he was there.
 It seemed to be the only anywhere
 (Neither of us at our best
 There)

Hope against hope to be next
 To be smashed
 but afraid.
 Afraid of the cracks so longed for.
 Scared of the chinks in a pink-flowered border.
 Afraid to admit, to know and to see:
 Neither of us at our best.

Tired
 Tired of dirty or clean
 Weary of meeting lonely to lonely
 Sick of fearing the smashing
 Tired
 Tired of only
 Jesus and me.

SDMosf

Movie Review

Putney Swope

Don Merrill

PUTNEY SWOPE is a black comedy that calls itself the truth and soul movie. By dealing with the black man's desire to control power in an advertising world, PUTNEY SWOPE shows man's manipulation of man. In this case it is the black manipulation of the white.

The movie at times is so absurd, that it may cross the viewer's mind that these things could possibly be true. The election of Putney Swope, the central figure in the production, to the head of the advertising agency, is in itself an example of absurdity. It is the white men of the board who inadvertently put Putney in a power position after the chairman suddenly drops dead on the table in front of everyone.

Putney's bag is that no drastic changes will be made, although in the next scene everyone on the board is black. Success comes about in various ways for Putney. Seeing some of the finished absurd commercials, a realization of the hidden absurd desires and impulses of people hits the viewer between the eyes: A beauty contestant hit in the face with a pie, licks it off, raving about the goodness of flavor in Brand X pies. A man told of the nutritious value of a

breakfast cereal, complacently replies to the interviewer, "No shit." Another shows a harem of beauties in the back of a plane ready for the lucky ticket holder.

Seemingly inhuman in his power drive, Putney actually is displaying the real human in his advertising. Putney does not consider himself completely corrupt because he does discriminate against war toys, cigarettes, and booze although pot is smoked by members of his staff.

The start of Putney's downfall comes when a power-crazed black Arab denounces Putney for producing tasteless and meritless material, as well as stating that Putney has no soul.

The process of the establishment is always facing revolt. In PUTNEY SWOPE the revolution of Putney against the white man's established moral world is in turn rebelled against by members who want to go even further than that with which Putney is satisfied. The film hits with both outrageous comedy and horrid realization, and one leaves the theater wondering just how far revolution can go. Just as Putney stealthily departs with a bag of money, PUTNEY SWOPE leaves us with a bag of questions.

Introducing Talbot Village

"WAX N' SUCH"

Candle Shop & Gallery
Everything Handmade!
2147 N. Talbot

MORERA'S LEATHER GOODS

Custom made
2147 N. Talbot

SEAMS & STITCHES DRESS SHOP

Ladies' Pants, Dresses, Gowns
All Clothes Custom Made
2178 N. Talbot

THE KINETIC DORMOUSE

Posters, Pipes,
Incense, Jewelry,
Papers, Hats,
Lites & Walnettos
2153 N. Talbot

Peddler

5:30 again.

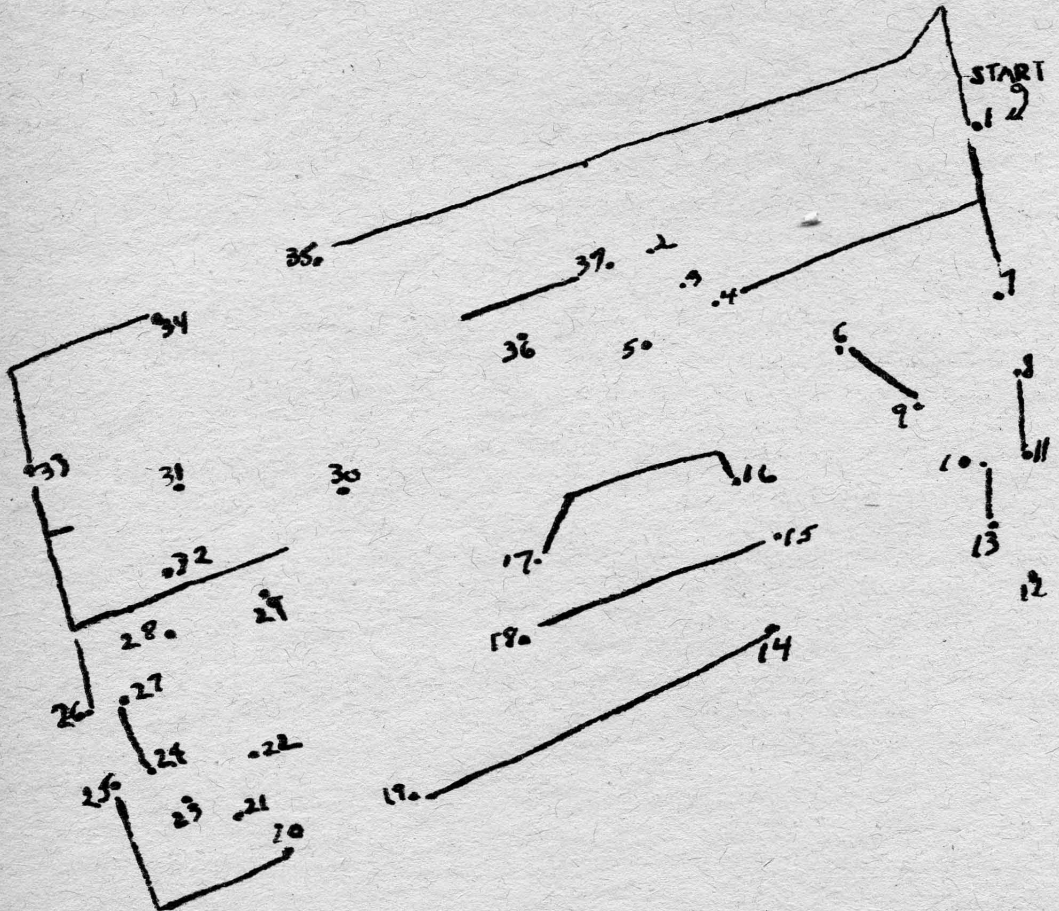
They pour out the door on Maryland Street,
 some still wearing can-I-help-you smiles
 and the buyers fatigued,
 having all day outdressed
 and outsnobbed each other.
 They swish left to the parking lots
 and right to the bus stops,
 passing by a small, wizened, ugly little...person.
 An old, handled hat
 and a maxi-worn coat
 frame his doggy-sincere face.
 He hugs his newspaper treasures
 which he'll give you for only a dime.
 Wafting pungent airs at \$25 an ounce
 the Beautiful Ones glide around him
 to shiny cars
 and dirty buses.

5:45 again.

She comes out the door with books (Plato and Hemingway)
 and uniform (it needs washing).
 He becomes a little triumph
 reflected in two moist eyes.

Carole Williams

'TRIVIA' ?



KC

Book Review

Slaughterhouse-Five

Or The Children's Crusade:

A Duty-Dance With Death

Michael Quinn

I am pleased to announce the appearance of the first earthly prototype of the Tralfamadorian novel, which as everyone knows, is the highest art form of the four dimensional beings on the distant planet, Tralfamadore. The person responsible for this innovation is Kurt Vonnegut Jr., formerly thought of as being merely a science-fiction writer, but who can now claim to be both a social critic and amateur philosopher, as well as a newly initiated artist.

Slaughter House-Five does not have a plot; it has a theme, and that is death. Instead of a story line it is actually many short vignettes which are arranged much as are the facets of a finely cut diamond, and which are unified only in the personage of Billy Pilgrim, the novel's main character. Billy has a problem; his problem is that he can slip out of the present and travel through time to live in another part of his life. Billy has died and been born several times; he can go from his present life in 1968 to Germany in 1945 where, as a prisoner of war he witnessed the massive fire-bombings of Dresden in which 135,000 people died. He knows he will be murdered on February 13, 1976. Wierd?

Billy has been kidnapped by a flying saucer and brought to the planet Tralfamadore, where he is exhibited in a zoo and mated with a blue movie queen from earth named Montana Wildhack.

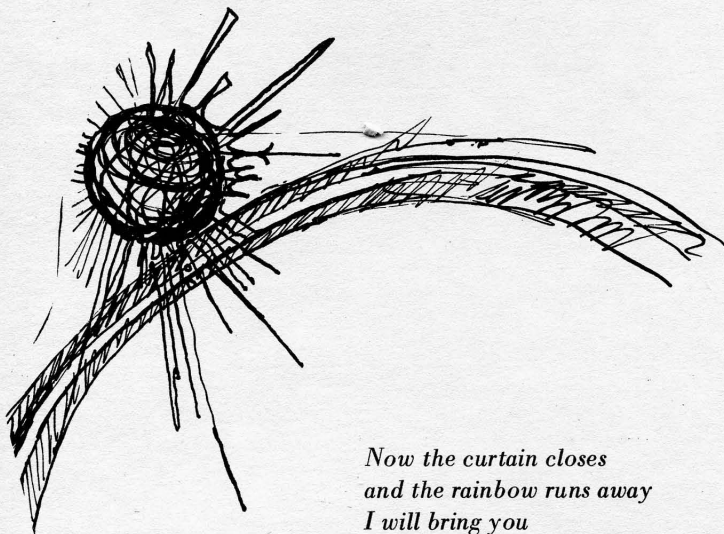
There is no time in *Slaughter House-Five*, just experiences.

On Tralfamadore Billy has learned that all earthlings live under an illusion; time really isn't a progression of irretrievable moments but something which can be viewed all at once. Death is not really so bad after all because you are just as much alive in one moment as you are dead in another...they say.

Having discovered the truth, Billy, the unlikely Prometheus, has resolved to tell his fellow men. That such knowledge about time has grave consequences for earthly lives is implicit in the authors's characterizations. People are playthings in a mechanistic universe and really have no free will. This is certainly the truth in Billy's case: he never even speaks unless spoken to, and his after-image in the reader's mind resembles a dead fish on Lake Michigan. Indeed all the characters in Billy's life are such marsh-mallows that the author has succeeded in projecting life as a worn out charade.

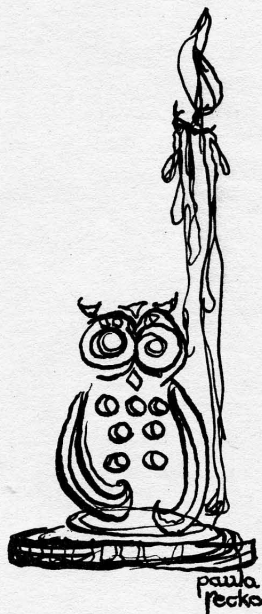
Other men have not, unlike Billy, discovered the secret of time and death; they must face the future without Billy's comforting knowledge. Billy Pilgrim, in many ways representing the author, has his 'dance' with death' during the war, in Dresden, and even in his ability to see his own death. The author, citing Celine, observes that there can be no art without coming to terms with death. If so, then Billy Pilgrim is the potential artist.

One can finally understand that Vonnegut is writing his 'Dresden book' to fulfill the obligation, his 'duty-dance with death', as every man must before he becomes an artist. So it goes.



*Now the curtain closes
and the rainbow runs away
I will bring you
Incense owls by night
By candlelight
By jewelight
If only you will stay
Pretty baby, won't you
Wake up, it's a
Chelsea Morning.*

Joni Mitchell



*Paula
Pecko*

We of the Maelstrom
are amongst you
in this place
visibly and invisibly,
through the grace of
the Most High
to whom the hearts off all
just men are turned,
in order
to save our fellow men
from the error
of death

